

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**September 24, 2013**

**Call to Order:** 6:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Kristin Lewis-Savage, Chair  
Martha Sumner, Vice-Chair  
Tricia Holt  
Gayle Hamel  
Neal Morin  
Darrell Britton  
David Gerns  
Ben Sadewicz  
Dennis Heffernan  
Barry Weymouth (*arrived 6:45 p.m.*)  
John Sherman, Selectmen Ex-Officio

Also Present: Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Dennis Heffernan.

**BUDGET PRESENTATIONS:**

**Town Clerk Budget – Presented by Plaistow Town Clerk, Maryellen Pelletier**

M. Pelletier explained the Town Clerk's proposed line items for the 2014 budget:

Level Funded Budget Line Items:

- Salary for Deputy Town Clerk and Assistant \$ 43,715.00
- Town Clerk Salary \$ 39,916.00
- Computer License Fee \$ 885.00
- Dog Tags and Forms \$ 600.00
- Office Equipment & Maintenance \$ 1,000.00

Increased Budget Line Items:

- Telephone (+\$100.00) \$ 1,000.00
- Based on actuals
- Costs for support and upgrades for current vehicle/boat book values and fees
- Training Expenses (+\$1250.00) \$ 2,100.00
- Taking over training responsibilities for Deputy (shared with Tax Collector)
- Moved more mileage monies to this line to over trainings
- Added New England Town Clerks (NETC) Conference to list
- Dues (+\$25.00) \$ 45.00

- Must pay dues to attend NETC Conference
- Postage (+\$200.00) \$ 4,500.00
- It has been reported that there is to be another postage increase in the coming year

#### Decreased Budget Line Items

- Computer Hardware/Software (-\$251.00) \$ 4,117.00
- Office Supplies (-\$4,630) \$ 1,000.00
- Vital Records Book restoration/preservation process has been nearly complete
- Mileage Reimbursement (-\$50) \$ 700.00
- Moved some mileage monies to training line

#### Discussion:

There was discussion regarding the restoration/repair of the Vital Records Books. It was noted that for the most part they are complete and there is a comfort level for how the status of the old records books and the storage of all records going forward. It was noted that the records are all being captured on microfiche and maintained in a temperature controlled storage room; in proper archival boxes; and for the most part out of the line of the fire suppression sprinklers.

Maryellen Pelletier talked about the State grant that was used to for a study of records storage, noting all the procedures they currently used are based on the recommendations from that study.

There was discussion regarding the copier repair/maintenance contract. It was noted that the Town Clerk's machine had its own contract and that they were very happy with the services of their vender.

S. Fitzgerald offered that all contracts across all departments would be looked at annually to see which ones made sense to combine.

It was noted that the revenues reported on the handouts were current as of September 16, 2013.

*It was noted in the handout that this amount has been approved by the Board of Selectmen (BOS).*

***G. Hamel moved, second by T. Holt, to accept for consideration the Town Clerk Budget in the amount of \$99,578.00. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 10-0-0 U/A***

#### **Tax Collector Budget – Presented by Plaistow Tax Collector, Rosemarie Bayek**

R. Bayek explained the Tax Collector's proposed line items for the 2014 budget:

#### Level Funded Budget Line Items:

- Part-time Position (Deputy) \$ 7,150.00
- Tax Collector's Salary \$ 27,528.00
- Mortgage Research \$ 2,675.00
- Telephone \$ 520.00

- Mailing Services (tax bill preparation/mailing) \$ 2,572.00
- Dues \$ 40.00
- Office Supplies \$ 363.00
- Postage \$ 3,900.00
- Equipment Repairs \$ 400.00
- Mileage Reimbursement \$ 649.00
- Recording (Registry of Deeds Fees) \$ 400.00
- Research Unknown TC Deeds \$ 2,000.00

#### Increased Budget Line Items

- Data Processing (software support) (+\$209.00) \$ 2,119.00
- Based on actual invoice

#### Decreased Budget Line Items

- Training (-\$425.00) \$ 500.00
- Training of shared Deputy being done by Town Clerk

R. Bayek offered that the bottom line budget request for the Tax Collector budget is \$50,816.00

*It was noted in the handout that this amount has been approved by the Board of Selectmen (BOS).*

#### Discussion:

There was discussion regarding the Mailing Services item noted to have been reviewed by the BOS in the amount of \$2,572.00 and showing on the handout as \$2,672.00. R. Bayek assured that she had intended to level-fund the line at \$2,572.00 as reviewed by the BOS.

There was discussion regarding mailing rates increases. R Bayek offered that she didn't think she needed to revise that line at this time.

*B. Weymouth arrived at 6:45 p.m.*

***K. Lewis-Savage moved, second by T. Holt, to take under consideration the Tax Collector's budget in the amount of \$50,816.00. There was no discussion on the motion and the vote was 10-0-1(Weymouth abstaining).***

#### **Finance Administration – Presented by Town Manager, Sean Fitzgerald**

S. Fitzgerald explained the Finance Administration proposed line items for the 2014 budget:

#### Level Funded Budget Line Items

- Salaries/Accounting \$ 65,800.00

Mileage Reimbursement \$ 333.00

Professional Audit

\$ 20,077.00

Increased Budget Line Items

- Data Processing (+\$1,000.00) \$ 5,000.00
- Based upon the Fall invoice
- Training (+\$374.00) \$ 1,174.00
- Office Supplies (+\$200.00) \$ 1,000.00

S. Fitzgerald noted that there had been a change in the personnel in the Finance Department. He added that there would be a job posting soon to fill the position, adding that the increases in the Finance Administration Budget were related to bringing a new person in, fitting out their office and training that person.

S. Fitzgerald offered that the proposed 2014 budget for Finance Administration is \$93,384.00.

Discussion:

It was noted that the year-to-date expenditures in the mileage line were only \$52.00 and were only \$28.00 the previous year, yet the amount requested for the 2014 budget was still \$333.00.

S. Fitzgerald offered that he would like to keep that amount in that line to be able to reimburse a new employee to attend training. He added that they would soon be checking with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to see if there were going to be any changes in the Federal mileage reimbursement figure, which the Town follows.

S. Fitzgerald explained that the Town is in the third year of a three-year contract with the current auditing firm. He noted that there would be a Request For Proposal (RPF) sent out in the next week to solicit bids for a new contract, so the "Professional Audit" line may change if a new vendor is contracted. S. Fitzgerald added that he may be suggesting to the BOS to extend the current contract for a single year and that would keep the line level funded for 2014.

*It was noted in the handout that this amount has been approved by the Board of Selectmen (BOS).*

***G. Hamel moved, second by N. Morin, to take under consideration the proposed Finance Administration budget in the amount of 93,384.00. There was no discussion on the motion and the vote was 11-0-0 U/A.***

**Financial Accounting – Presented by Town Manager, Sean Fitzgerald**

S. Fitzgerald explained all the budget line items for this budget:

Level Funded Line Items:

- Treasurer's Salary \$ 7,244.00
- Budget Committee Secretary \$ 1,020.00
- Budget Committee Expenses \$ 200.00

Decreased Budget Line Items

- Trustee's Mileage (-\$52.00) \$ 115.00

- Based on anticipated utilization in 2104

S. Fitzgerald offered the total 2014 proposed budget for Financial Account is \$8,579.00.

*It was noted in the handout that this amount has been approved by the Board of Selectmen (BOS).*

Discussion:

It was noted that the “Budget Committee Expenses” line was overspent. S. Fitzgerald noted that due mostly to the Annual Budget Committee training hosted by the Town. He explained that training is offered by Local Government Center (LGC) at the cost of \$475.00. It is hoped that some of this cost can be offset by other towns sending their people to Plaistow for training.

K. Lewis-Savage suggested that the \$475.00 be included in the Executive Training Budget Line.

S. Fitzgerald offered that he thought it was important for the Budget Committee to also support some training in their budget.

Suggestions were made for other sources of training such as more sharing with other towns and webinars.

There was additional discussion of the structural changes that are happening at LGC and whether or not they may affect the ability of the Town to obtain low cost training.

***M. Sumner moved, second by T. Holt, to take under consideration the proposed Financial Accounting budget in the amount of \$8,579.00. There was no discussion on the motion and the vote was 11-0-0 U/A.***

**Debt Service – Presented by Town Manager, Sean Fitzgerald**

S. Fitzgerald noted there was a \$1 place holder in the Debt Services line as the Town has no debt at this time. He added that he does not anticipate a need for a TAN (Tax Anticipation Note) as revenues are running close to what was predicted. He noted that since the bond had been paid off for the library the Town does not have any long-term debt at this time. S. Fitzgerald added that, with the need for a Highway Garage and a new Public Safety Complex for the Police and Fire Department space needs, the Town may need to look at bonding projects in the future.

S. Fitzgerald noted that over the last four years the Unexpended Fund Balance has increased to \$3.6M.

***G. Hamel moved, second by N. Morin, to take under consideration the proposed Debt Service budget in the amount of \$1.00. There was no discussion on the motion and the vote was 11-0-0***

**DISCUSSION OF UPCOMING MEETINGS/SCHEDULE AND HANDOUTS**

K. Lewis-Savage noted that the request was to have longer and fewer meetings. She explained that the Budget Committee was following the BOS schedule of review, but eight (8) days behind.

There was some discussion about the formatting of the department reports given to the Committee and how changes could be made for easier reviewing.

M. Sumner noted that she would not be available for the October 8 meeting.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**CIP – D. Gerns**

D. Gerns reported that the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Committee had essentially finished their work on this year’s plan. He noted that some items had been pushed out to later years based on departmental recommendations.

J. Sherman offered that the CIP consisted of a spreadsheet and a text document. He noted that the spreadsheet was complete and the Leigh Komornick was updating the text document and a couple of inconsistencies that she had identified.

There was a brief discussion on the purpose of the CIP tool. It was noted that review of the CIP was on the BudCom's agenda.

J. Sherman noted that the Library was not on the CIP as they had their own strategic capital plan. He added that the CIP was included in the Town Report each year.

S. Fitzgerald added that the CIP is not a budget document but a planning tool. He commended the work done by the CIP committee.

Public Safety Complex Committee – N. Morin and D. Heffernan

N. Morin noted that he had attended the last two (2) meetings. One meeting there was a discussion of the land swap between the Town and Alden Palmer to acquire land to potentially improve the Public Safety Complex and add land to the Cemetery. He added that the second meeting there was discussion on how to better educate the public regard the filling in of the frog pond located next to the Public Safety Complex to be able to use that area as an access road.

J. Sherman noted there was more involved than just filling in the area and moving on; that it's more complicated.

S. Fitzgerald added the land swap with Mr. Palmer could potentially allow for year-round access to the cemetery. He noted that the issue would be back before the BOS in the next few weeks and they would be looking at the possibility of utilizing Public Safety Impact Fee Funds.

OLD BUSINESS

Already address

NEW BUSINESS

A date needs to be set to have the BudCom picture taken for the Town Report

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Dee Voss  
Recording Secretary